A COMPANION

TO

IN MEMORIAM

"Not for all the artist's cunning
  Do I feel my spirit melt,
Not for what the poet utters—
  But for what the man has felt."

A COMPANION

TO

IN MEMORIAM

BY

ELIZABETH RACHEL CHAPMAN

AUTHOR OF
'A LITTLE CHILD'S WREATH,' 'THE NEW PURGATORY
AND OTHER POEMS,' ETC.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE issue of a second edition of my Analysis of *In Memoriam* gives me the opportunity of carrying out two wishes regarding it which were personally expressed to me by the Author of the Poem. The first referred to a correction he desired me to make in my interpretation of the opening lines of Section CXXXI.—

> "O living will that shalt endure
> When all that seems shall suffer shock,
> Rise in the spiritual rock,
> Flow thro' our deeds and make them pure," etc.

Here, and here only, he told me, I had mistaken his meaning. The apostrophe was not to the Divine Will, to that "Eternal Power," as I had phrased it, "which is over all and through all and in us all," but to the

purified human will, that Free-will, synonymous with the "higher and enduring part of man," in which he believed to the end. It was, to be sure, bounded and hampered now, like a bird in a cage; but it was a real thing for all that—the central fact, if it was also the "main miracle" of existence. Even now there was choice of perches for us in our cage—the lower or the higher, but the day would come when the roof would be lifted off and man's Free-will would be made "one with the Free-will of the Universe."

On another occasion, speaking of the somewhat sluggish sale of the little work, he said: "But you should have told them I liked it," implying, I thought, that some mention of the fact that it had met with his cordial approval might have been incorporated in the book itself. It is a happiness to me to be able, after a lapse of some ten years, to obey him.

ELIZABETH RACHEL CHAPMAN.

INSCRIPTION ON THE TABLET AT CLEVEDON

To the Memory of

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM,

OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, B.A.,

Eldest son of HENRY HALLAM, Esq., and of JULIA MARIA his wife,
Daughter of Sir A. ELTON, Bart., of Clevedon Court,
Who was snatched away by sudden death at Vienna, on SEPT. 15, 1833,
In the 23rd year of his age.

And now in this obscure and solitary church repose the mortal
remains of one too early lost for public fame, but already
conspicuous among his contemporaries for the
brightness of his genius, the depth of his
understanding, the nobleness of his
disposition, the fervour of
his piety, and the
purity of his
life.

VALE DULCISSIME
VALE DILECTISSIME DESIDERATISSIME
REQUIESCAS IN PACE
PATER AC MATER HIC POSTHAC REQUIESCAMUS TECUM
USQUE AD TUBAM.

IN MEMORIAM

The Poet dedicates his Elegy to that Unseen Love which is, he trusts, at the heart of things, in which all things live and move and have their being, which is perfect power and perfect tenderness and perfect justice. He prays forgiveness of this divine Power for all the errors, all the sins, which are in his song of suffering and pain. He prays forgiveness for its merits, and for his grief. And he trusts to meet his friend again, perfected "in Him."

I.

The Poet holds that we may outlive and even profit by our sins of the past, but he sees not, in his grief, how the void misery of bereavement can be turned to account. Unless, indeed, the loss be forgotten, which were far worse, as leaving the bereaved less worthy, if less unhappy.

II.

Gazing at the gloomy immemorial yew in the churchyard, the Poet longs to exchange his feverish being for a like passionless immobility, and longing, he begins to fancy that in very deed some such petrifaction is stealing over him.

III.

He doubts if he should hug his sorrow, such a lying lip has Sorrow, so treacherous

a companion is she. She clothes all nature in her own phantom hollowness, her own mourning-garb; she blurs the truth, and it may well be that she should be stifled rather than cherished.

IV.

In the still hours of night, when the will is freed from conscious restraint, and the tired faculties cast themselves upon the mercy of sleep, his nameless, ceaseless trouble haunts him still. He suffers, scarce knowing why, in sleep. The morning brings with it some gleams of resolve and of hope.

V.

Oppressed by the poverty of language, by the trick of all human utterance to garble that which it would fain express, the Poet hesitates to clothe his thoughts in verse.

But the exercise is sweet and soothing to him. He will continue to seek solace from it, conscious of its imperfections.

VI.

He will none of the commonplaces of condolence, as that "other friends remain" to him, that "loss is common," and so forth. The void place left in his heart can never be filled by any other, and loss is made heavier, not lighter, by the thought that every day and every hour it is shattering some loving heart.

VII.

At early dawn, sleepless and restless, he wanders towards the house whose door his friend had been used to open to him. While he muses there, the city wakes, and, amid rain and gloom, another dreary day begins.

VIII.

The Poet likens himself, in his loneliness, to a lover finding the home of the beloved empty of her presence, and feeling his heart grow sick. Yet, as he might find in her garden and treasure for her sake a flower she once loved, so will the Poet cherish that flower of song his friend delighted in. However much or little it may be worth, at least it shall be consecrated to him.

IX.

His loving fancy plays around the vessel which is bringing home to English shores all that is left of Arthur. He bids winds and waves be gentle to his more than brother.

X.

He pictures all the sights and sounds of the homeward-bound ship, carrying the

precious freight which he desires to have deposited in quiet church or churchyard, not in the turbulent ocean. Doubtless it is but the look of peace that beguiles him; but we are made thus.

XI.

The profound stillness of a calm autumn morning harmonises with the calm (if he may call it so) of his despair, and speaks to him of the deeper calm of him who is swayed now but by the motion of the deep.

XII.

The Poet compares himself to a carrier-pigeon bearing a mournful message. Like her, he must needs hasten home, and home for him is still the ship where Arthur is, and still he must be brooding over her in hour-long reverie.

XIII.

He is like a widower, for ever missing and for ever weeping his "late espoused saint." As such a one, between sleep and waking, scarce believes his loved one dead, so the musing Poet cannot always wholly realise his loss. He bids Time and the years teach him that it is real and not a melancholy dream.

XIV.

Speaking to the ship that is the home of his heart, he tells her how he should nothing marvel to stand beside her, lying in port, and see among her passengers the living form of the man he held as half divine. He cannot, in his dream-like grief, hold him dead. Were they to meet thus, grasp hands, and talk together, he should not count it strange.

XV.

As the Poet's calmer mood was reflected in the calmness of a quiet morning, so a stormy evening seems to him to reflect the wild unrest that now possesses him. He loves the reckless, changeful fury of the elements—or would love it—but for the thought that it may be wrecking Arthur's ship. Yet fancies of her gliding smoothly in still waters soothe and sustain him.

XVI.

He questions with himself concerning these strange alternations of mood, this balancing between calm despair and wild unrest. Is his sorrow variable? Or do these changes affect the surface merely of his deep-seated grief? Or, again, has his reason been unhinged by grief?

XVII.

He welcomes the dear vessel, now drawing near. Tenderly and reverently he blesses her for the sacred office she has rendered him, and bids all tempests spare her, and all good influences wait on her for ever.

XVIII.

And now she has touched the shore, and Arthur will be laid to rest in his native land. The thought brings consolation—brings, too, the passionate longing to clasp him once again, to die for him, if it could be. Remains to live a life worthy of him.

XIX.

Musing on the resting-place of his friend, the Poet likens his own heart to the tidal rivers near which he lies. As these are silent when fullest, so his hours of deepest

grief are voiceless. As their waves become audible at ebb-tide, so, as his worst anguish ebbs, the power of speech and song return to him.

XX.

Or, varying the image, he will compare the moods in which he can express his grief to the garrulous mourning of servants for a kind master newly dead. The children of the dead gaze mutely on the vacant chair, and so his "other griefs within," the closer and more poignant griefs, are mute.

XXI.

The Poet's lament is interrupted by carping voices. One taxes him with effeminacy, another with parading his grief; a third chides him for indifference to patriotic causes, and to the transformations which science is working in the world. His

patient answer is that song is natural to him, and that, if his note is sad, it is because his heart is sad, like the bird's whose brood is stolen.

XXII.

He sings now of that fair friendship, full of spring gladness, of hope and song, which blessed him for four years. In the fifth year the path that he and Arthur trod together descended into the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Arthur passed first into the darkness, and, longing to follow, his friend remembers gladly that for him too the Shadow waits.

XXIII.

But it is hard to finish the journey alone. The Shadow will give rest—rest from doubt as well as rest from trouble—but the way to where he sits is dreary now and changed

from where it ran through a pleasant country, gladdened by happy communings and fair imaginings and every boon of friendship.

XXIV.

And yet, seeing that no earthly joys are perfect, that there are flecks of darkness upon the very sun itself, he muses if this joy of his in human fellowship was indeed so flawless. May it not be the contrast with his present gloom which has made it appear so? Or else, has not mere distance lent to his friendship the glamour that ever surrounds things past?

XXV.

Yes, after all, that pathway was life—life with its chances and changes, its daily trials and crosses and cares. It was no primrose path, but that which made it seem so was

Love, who lightened every burden, dividing it between the brother-souls.

XXVI.

Nor will the Poet cease to tread it mourning, nor tire of thinking of the past. He longs to prove his love eternal. He scorns inconstancy to the dead, and prays that he may die ere morning, if to live means to grow indifferent to all that constitutes true life.

XXVII.

And not in his darkest moods does he ever wish that his love had not been. He envies neither the captive that never raged for liberty, nor the careless animal enjoyment that has no sense for higher things, nor the heart that never suffered because it never loved. There is a peace which is born of want, and he prefers his pain.

XXVIII.

It is the first Christmas Eve after Arthur's death. The Poet listens to the bells of four village churches near, now sounding loudly, now dying almost into silence. He had well-nigh wished that he might never hear the Christmas bells again, but now their joyous challenge to each other across the hills, their happy "Peace and goodwill, good-will and peace," touch his sorrow with the sacred joy of long ago.

XXIX.

But how keep Christmas Eve, as it was wont to be kept in the days when *he* was among the guests, first among the merry-makers, leader of dance and song and jest? The Christmas garlands are a mockery now, and if they are not banished from the house, it is because old custom too is but a passing

thing. The old traditions fade, like all things else in a world of change and loss. Why cheat them of their due before their time?

XXX.

And so the Christmas wreaths are hung, and the Christmas games begun; but the Shadow, Death, is in the midst, and laughter rings hollow, and hearts are heavy with sadness. A song sung once with him, and fraught with memories of him, leaves his mourning friends in tears, and silence falls, till one strikes a note of faith and courage, persuaded of the eternal being and of the changeless sympathy of the dead. So that the Poet bids Christmas Day approach with more of hope.

XXXI.

The Poet's thoughts turn to the story of Lazarus and dwell musingly on all it tells

us and all it does not tell us. There is so much that he would know; above all, if Lazarus, during those four days, could hear the voice of Mary, weeping at his grave, and could yearn over her. Why was not more revealed?

XXXII.

Yet it may be that Mary, when he was given back to her, asked him neither that nor aught besides. He is there, and the Saviour is there, and Mary loves, believes, adores. It is enough for her to gaze upon her brother and then to bathe the Master's feet with spikenard and with tears of rapture. And is this not best—at least most blessed—to leave all curious doubts and questionings aside, and merely pray, trust, love?

XXXIII.

Ah, yes! And let those who have not

such simplicity of trust, who deem, perhaps, that they have reached a higher standpoint, fought their way to a purer creed, beware of troubling the Mary-spirits that they know. It may be that their faith, which has outgrown all form, is a subtler thing, but is it as fruitful of good works as the childlike faith of the Marys? And let them beware lest, in a world of sin, it fail them in the hour of need.

XXXIV.

And now the Poet himself falls into those sad questionings the Marys know not. He feels the awful doubt if, indeed, there be any future life. In his anguish one thing only is apparent—that, without a future, this life itself is nought, and the fair earth is dust and ashes, and nothing is worth while, save to die.

XXXV.

What? Were life not worth having even for love's sake? If we could know, beyond a possibility of doubt, that there is no other life, would not love still make this one sweet? Away with the idle question. *Love* had not been, but for the instinct of immortality. There had been nothing but a mockery of love, mere careless fellowship, or brutish passion.

XXXVI.

The Poet's thoughts revert to "comfort clasped in truth revealed." They dwell upon the figure of the Christ in tender adoration. Here was a Word, indeed, that all could understand. The simple grandeur of that perfect human life is manifest to all, even to the humble toilers of earth, on whom abstract teaching and high philosophy

are thrown away. This living Lesson he who runs may read.

XXXVII.

But how shall his muse dare to profane these holy mysteries? She is of earth, and not for her is it to treat of things revealed. The song of human love and human loss alone is hers. These loftier themes pertain to Urania, not Melpomene. Yet—Arthur loved to speak of things divine, and so the Poet is fain to mingle some whisper of them in his singing.

XXXVIII.

Again the thought of comfort dies away. Again the note of human grief sounds loudest. There is no comfort anywhere, though spring has come—no comfort, save in this sad singing, which it may be—it may be—that Arthur hears.

XXXIX.

Re-visiting the churchyard now, in the springtime, the Poet notes the tender green shoots on the old yew whose "stubborn hardihood" of gloom he erstwhile envied. Can it be that such a sweet awakening, which comes to all, will come to him—even to him—and touch his sullen grief with beauty? Nay; Sorrow, who still blurs the universe for him, replies, the tender green will pass to gloom again, and dawning hope into regret.

XL.

If one could look on the departed as on a maiden who exchanges her parent's for her husband's home, who is not lost, but removed to a higher sphere, with other duties, other aims, and new responsibilities! Alas! she may return—at least, tidings may come of

her — but the beloved dead pursue their high appointed tasks in undiscovered lands. When the grave parts us, we are parted indeed.

XLI.

And we can no longer follow, as we could here, the steps by which they mount upward. Arthur's spirit, even here, was ever rising to fresh heights, but now—now—his friend can watch no longer, can share no longer, his progress to perfection. The silence and the loneliness so haunt the Poet, the dread lest their two souls will never harmonise again so chills him, that he cries out for death, if by any means they may be re-united.

XLII.

Yet, after all, were they truly mated here? Nay, Arthur was ever first, and as he led,

helped, guided in the past, so may he in the future. And what sweeter thing is there than for love to be taught of love that is also wisdom?

XLIII.

Besides, what if death be indeed sleep? If the spirit slumber, as in a trance, until the last awakening, then will the Poet lose nothing. Then his friend must needs love him when he awakes, as humanly, as tenderly as of yore.

XLIV.

If it be not so, if the dead sleep not, perchance they are too happy, as well as too perfect, to think upon the things of Time. The Poet prays that if, at any time, some little flash, some hint of earth, should surprise his friend in heaven, he would know that it is a message of his love.

XLV.

Musing upon this life and the next, the Poet deems that one use of this one may be the gradual growth of consciousness, of the sense of personal identity. And this can never be unlearned. The man's individuality is the same here and beyond. He has not to learn himself anew in heaven. Thus the dead forget not.

XLVI.

He prays that his love for his lost friend may dwell with him to the very end of life—not sorrowfully, or his life's work could not be done—but still ever in his heart. So that, looking back upon this life from out the clearness and the calm of the other, it may appear all tinged with roseate hues of love—all—not the five rich years of friendship only.

XLVII.

The Poet rejects those theories of a future state which deny the continuance of individual being. A vague nirvana, in which the personal soul is merged in the general Soul, can never satisfy the desires of love which seeks not merely to meet again, but to know again those gone before. At least love demands some halting-place where a last embrace, a last farewell, may be taken, before the spirits fade into the vast.

XLVIII.

The Poet disclaims all intention of handling exhaustively the high themes upon which he touches in his Lament. His brief lays are born of Sorrow which does not reason, prove, define—but, as it were, sports with words. She plays now with this doubt, now with that fancy, as the fit takes her.

She would not, if she could, trust herself to more than these short swallow-flights of song.

XLIX.

But let no man think that the fancied hopes and fears with which he toys touch more than the surface of the mourner's grief. He hails every random influence that art, nature, philosophy may shed upon that sullen surface, chequering and dimpling it, like shafts of light and tender breezes playing upon a pool. Beneath, in the depths, the very springs of life are only tears.

L.

Hungrily longing for that departed presence, the Poet prays that it may be ever near him, in weakness and depression, in fierce feverish pain and sickness, in moods of doubt and pessimism — not least in death, to usher him into the life eternal.

LI.

Nor will he give ear to the natural doubt, whether, if, indeed, the dead could be ever near, seeing with clear eyes the baser, as well as the nobler part of us, they would not love us less? Is there not much we would fain hide from them? Nay, let them look us through and through. To doubt that they can know us, and yet love, is to wrong them. For they are wise with the wisdom of death, and pitiful with the large mercy of God.

LII.

But does the Poet, in his turn, love the dead as he ought? Do not these baser moods, does not his human frailty, hinder that love, which (if it be worthy the name) mirrors the perfections of the beloved? What boots it to honour the dead with the lips

only, not the life? Alas! no ideal, no example, can wholly banish sin and error from mortal life. The Spirit of true love rebukes the doubter, and bids him patiently endure till Time shall sift the evil from the good.

LIII.

It may even be that the errors and follies of youth are but the redundancy of a richly-endowed nature, that without them a man's soberer after-life would be barren of good. But it behoves us to take care how we preach such a doctrine to the young, and, in general, to see that such philosophising confuse not for us the simple outlines of truth and right.

LIV.

To hope that all evil will somehow, somewhen, turn to good, is inevitable. We know not anything, but we can trust that error and

folly and sin and suffering are "good, only misunderstood"; that they serve some purpose as yet unknown to us; that no meanest creature suffers uselessly or only vicariously; that at last—at last—every winter will change to spring, and every living thing be blessed. Yet is this but a hope, but a dream, but the cry of a child in the night.

LV.

Is not the desire for a future existence where the broken threads of this one may be taken up again, the thing that is most divine in us? Yet how is it negatived by nature at every turn! She cares only for the type, not for the individual, and the Poet beholding everywhere the cynicism and the callousness of her operations, falters, and cries but tremblingly to that Power of Love behind nature, faintly trusting the larger hope.

LVI.

For indeed, viewed more closely, nature appears careless even of the type. With her, the species, as well as the individual, is transitory, and why should humanity be exempt from her law of evanescence, of annihilation? To the Poet, in his despair, there seems no escape from the frailty and futility of a life for whose duration nature gives no warrant, and he cries aloud for the voice of his friend to allay the anguish of the most torturing of doubts. His own heart answers that it can be quieted only behind the veil.

LVII.

Once more the Poet strives to bid farewell, as it were, to his friend's grave, to leave his wild singing, and turn to the work of life. For his dirge, he fears, can neither do honour to the dead, nor yet profit himself. Yet how

can he work in the world? Half his life is gone. His task will be to listen to an everlasting funeral knell, ringing a perpetual Ave, an endless Adieu.

LVIII.

This eternal knell of Ave and Adieu it is which the Poet has been translating into song—his song of farewell to his friend—and, indeed, to life. And what has that song availed, save to vex, like the slow dropping of water in some dank vault, hearts already vexed by their mortality. The high Muse exhorts the Poet to patience, and bids him live to commemorate his love and grief in worthier fashion.

LIX.

He prays Sorrow, if, indeed, she will abide with him always, to sometimes assume less

harsh and cruel forms than those which she habitually puts on. Then, indeed, he may hope to do good work, so concealing her (although she will be ever there) that her voice will be unheard by others in his singing, and he alone of all the world will know that Sorrow is his bride.

LX.

Seeking again for some image of his love for Arthur, he likens it to that of a poor village girl for one in a higher station than her own. As such a one would pine in restless solitude while her love mingled with his peers, so does he fret, and doubt, and weep, half jealously comparing the baseness of his state with the gloriousness of Arthur's.

LXI.

In Arthur's happy second state, it may be that he holds converse with the mighty dead,

with Plato, Dante, Shakespeare. Alas! if this be so, how dwarfed must his old friend of earth be in his sight! And yet he proudly pleads to be remembered; for love is love, and not the soul of Shakespeare could love Arthur more than did and does his friend.

LXII.

Though, if to remember him could in any wise trouble Arthur's joy, he would have his love forgotten or recalled but as some foolish first love is recalled by one who lives to wed an equal mind.

LXIII.

And yet why should he fear that to remember him with pitying tenderness could harass Arthur in his exalted sphere? His own compassionate love for the lower animals does not hinder his heavenward aspiration; and supposing Arthur to stand to him in the

relation in which he stands to them, may it not be that Arthur can spare him love—not impairing his higher tasks, his loftier enjoyments?

LXIV.

Still brooding on all the possible relations of his lost friend to the life and the love that he has left, the Poet now compares him to some genius of lowly birth, who should leave his obscure home to rise to the highest offices of state, and should sometimes, in the midst of his greatness, remember, as in a dream, the dear scenes of old, and, it may be, the humble villager who was his chosen playmate.

LXV.

But it shall be as that sweet soul wills. The Poet, now in happier mood, convinced that love cannot be lost, but must live on everlastingly, trusts to his constancy, and to

the efficacy of that high friendship, even rising to the joyful faith that, as Arthur is still a power in his own life, so his own influence may yet be working to noble ends in Arthur.

LXVI.

To one who had thought him warped with sorrow, and marvelled to see him sometimes gay among the gay, the Poet shows that the loss which has made a desert in his mind has not embittered him. He feels gently to all. He is as one become blind—not uncheerful—although the sense of his privation is ever with him.

LXVII.

The moonlight falling on his bed, brings fancies of how it also falls upon the church by the sea where rests the beloved dead, illuminating with mystic glory the inscription

on his tablet. At early dawn the Poet's waking thoughts revert to the same spot, and picture the marble whitening in the growing light.

LXVIII.

But although he may think upon the dead in the night, he cannot dream of his friend as dead. In dreams the two walk together as of yore, and sleep knows nothing of death. Only sometimes there is a trouble on Arthur's face. How is this? The thing perplexes the Poet in his dream, but, waking, he discerns that it is nothing but the trouble of his own heart, which, dream-fashion, is transferred to the face of his companion.

LXIX.

One strange dream he has, which, for all it is weird and hard to understand, brings him rest. In it it seems to him that he has

chosen, that he is wearing the crown of thorns, the heritage of prophet and martyr. And all the people flout him. But one, of angelic face and form, transforms it with a touch to a victor's crown, speaking mystic words of comfort.

LXX.

Often he strives, between sleep and waking, to recall the features of the departed. But they are blurred by the crowding fancies and visions of that state. It is only when all striving ceases, and the will is passive, that, unexpectedly, the fair face shines forth and calms his soul.

LXXI.

At last—at last—after many a perturbed dream, many a fantastic vision, capricious Sleep is kind to the Poet, bringing back vividly, one blessed night, a happy summer

holiday in France, with Arthur. He bids sleep return and bring a stronger opiate still, if haply the very words that they were wont to say to one another in those days of joyful intercourse may be said again.

LXXII.

It is the first anniversary of Arthur's death. The morning breaks in angry gusts of rain and wind ; and the desolation of a September storm is over all the land. But had that day dawned in peaceful summer splendour, or amid soft autumnal breezes, to the Poet it would have seemed as dark, as desolate, as now. He bids it hasten, like a thing of guilt, to its lugubrious end.

LXXIII.

The Poet's thoughts are turned to fame. While lamenting that his friend was "too early lost for public fame," he muses what a

vain thing fame is at the best, in a vast universe, composed of many worlds and as immeasurable in duration as in extent. Our task here, and the renown it brings, may be left with God. A man's true crown of rejoicing is not in any fading renown that he may win, but in that divine inward force which, whether it come to full fruition here or no, is his best possession.

LXXIV.

Yet that Arthur, had he lived, would have earned the brightest fame the world can give, becomes more and more apparent to his friend. As watchers by the dead ofttimes perceive a growing likeness to some kinsman, so Arthur's kinship with the great ones of earth becomes more manifest, the more he meditates on him. But what avails to speak of it? He has passed to the silent land.

LXXV.

The Poet's grief is the best measure of his friend's greatness. Even had he tried to express the inexpressible, and hymn that greatness instead of merely singing his own sorrow, he must have failed. Nor would the world have listened, the world that heeds only "things done that took the eye and had the price." Here silence shall best guard his fame. But somewhere—beyond the veil—those high tasks which Arthur is fulfilling are being wrought amid the praise they merit.

LXXVI.

Still the Poet broods upon fame—notably the fame of the singer. What immortality has verse? If the poetry of the world's youth, of Homer and of the Psalms, lives on, what chance, at least, has modern song of

lengthened life? This grows old while oak and yew are still young; and when they are old, where is it?

LXXVII.

With small hope for the duration of modern rhyme in general, and with a too lowly estimate of his own, he foretells a sorry fate for the Lament with which he soothes his pain. Yet utter it he must, for song is second nature to the Poet, and sweeter is it to him to sing his love and grief than to try higher flights, if haply he might win a transient fame.

LXXVIII.

Christmas again. A frost holds the earth in stillness, and the silent-falling snow and all the icy calm of nature harmonise with, while they intensify, the profound inward sense of loss. Outwardly it is as though this

sense had grown less keen. The Christmas revels proceed as usual; there are no external marks of distress. Can it be that the grief which is love has become deadened with time? The heart answers—no. Such grief becomes a part of us, an element in our complex being, and it lives on in the spirit's depth, for all our tears are dry.

LXXIX.

The Poet fears lest that line sung long ago,

"More than my brothers are to me,"

may have wounded a beloved brother who is also a brother-poet, and who has the very strongest claim on his affections. He shows him how it must not grieve him that he could say his friend was more to him than any brother. For they two were ever as one soul, but Arthur's nature was complementary to his own. He supplied that which was

lacking to the Poet, the very difference between them knitting them in closest friendship.

LXXX.

Sometimes he half wishes that it had been his lot to be removed by death from Arthur's side, instead of having been the one to be left mourning. At such times his fancy tries to picture how Arthur would have borne the sorrow that has brought himself so much unrest. He knows that it would have been nobly borne, and calmly, howsoever deep; and from such imaginings he draws consoling lessons of a like sublime submission to the will of God.

LXXXI.

Satisfied that time would but have added to the treasure of his love, each year unfolding and maturing it, he finds in such conviction food for an ever-growing grief. But

presently the sweet thought comes: Did not Death accomplish in an instant the work of the years, ripening at a touch the love that, but for him, would have developed slowly?

LXXXII.

The faith that that grand spirit lives, and lives to noble purpose otherwhere, is so strong in him, that his mind dwells not with any bitterness upon the horrors of the grave. Nor will he chide Death in that he bore so sweet a soul to a diviner sphere. His quarrel with Death is only this, that the two friends—both energising still—are severed, are no longer within sound of one another's voices.

LXXXIII.

With the dawning of the New Year, fresh hope quickens in the Poet's breast. He would fain hasten its laggard footsteps, long-

ing for the flowers of spring and for the glory of summer. Can trouble live in the spring —the season of life and love and music? Let the spring come, and he will sing for Arthur a sweeter, richer requiem.

LXXXIV.

The Poet's fancy draws with tender touches the outline of the earthly life that would have been Arthur's, had he lived. Especially he dwells upon that marriage which would have linked the friends still more closely together, making them brothers indeed. A thousand endearing and inspiring visions are called up by this train of thought—but, alas! in the end, it does but re-open the old wound, and break the low beginnings of content.

LXXXV.

In answer to one who questions him of the effect of his grief upon his character and life,

he shows that his long mourning has neither dimmed his faith, nor maimed his powers of loving, nor quenched in him the thirst for noble deeds. The spirit of his friend breathes on in him, turning sorrow into strength. At times it even seems as though he bade him solace himself with a new friendship—not a friendship which should supplant the first supreme and sacred one which is eternal—but one which should sweeten the years of separation with the blessedness of human sympathy. Such a friendship he gladly offers him to whom he speaks.

LXXXVI.

On a certain evening, balmy and glorious, after a day of showers, when a fresh breeze has chased away the rain-clouds, and the western sky is clothed in crimson, the Poet,—rapt,—tastes, well-nigh for the first time, of peace.

LXXXVII.

Re-visiting the University where they two, with a band of chosen friends, so often held debate, the memory of Arthur's pre-eminence among that little band, of his inspired discourse, his trenchant logic, his illumined countenance, returns with a new vividness. Each common sight and sound of college and of town speaks only of him.

LXXXVIII.

The Poet bids the nightingale unfold the secret of that tumultuous passion of song which seems now mournful, now exultant; half-despairing, half-enraptured. Like the "most melancholy bird," he is not all unhappy. His passion, too, enfolds a secret joy. The beauty and the glory of the universe begin to dominate his grief.

LXXXIX.

The Poet's birthplace and early home is full of associations with Arthur. Thinking of him there, the Poet calls up a series of sweet pictures of happy summer hours, when Arthur fled from the stir and din of town to that cool retreat, revelling in the shade of the lofty trees and in all country joys. Something of the calm and bliss of those far-off days steals over him as he tells of their delights—the country pleasures, and the pleasures of the soul and mind partaken of together.

XC.

Emphatically and solemnly he repudiates the thought that, could the beloved dead return to us, after howsoever long an interval, after whatsoever changes in our lives and in

our homes, their presence could be unwelcome to us. He who first uttered such a thought could have known little of love. Suddenly, indignant remonstrance melts into a cry of longing.

XCI.

Again the cry of longing—the yearning "Come!" and once more, "Come!" But the spring is here, and the summer at hand, and the season speaks of hope, not desolation, and entreaty melts almost into triumph, as fancy pictures the prayer answered, and that beloved form revealed—not in watches of the night—but in a glory of sunshine.

XCII.

Yet, were the vision granted, were the image of Arthur, as he knew him, verily to appear to him, would he believe that it was his friend

indeed? Even though the spirit recalled the past and foretold the future, how could he prove that his fancied words were not merely the memories or presentiments of his own mind? that the whole was not some juggle of his own brain?

XCIII.

No—such visions, apparitions, are not. We shall not—with our bodily eyes—behold the departed. But surely, surely, some finer, more intangible communion may be—spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost. In passionate invocation, the Poet pleads with his lost friend so to commune—soul to soul—with him.

XCIV.

The calmer the spirit, the purer, the more at peace with God and man, the more possible it becomes that such holy intercourse should

be vouchsafed. The heavenly spirits, themselves at peace, cannot make themselves heard in a tempestuous heart.

XCV.

On a still, warm summer night, so still that tapers burned without, and that talk and song had been carried on upon the lawn till late, the Poet, left, at length, alone, reads and re-reads the letters of the dead. There, in the night, the constant, changeless love of Arthur, and his courageous faith, boldly grappling with the doubts that few men dare to face, strike him with fresh amaze, and he muses upon that grand spirit, until, at last, it seems to descend upon his own, and he is rapt with it, in blissful trance. Doubt rudely wakens him, but doubt prevails not. It is presently quieted by a fair dawn, big with prophecy of glorious day.

XCVI.

His thoughts revert to the subject of doubt. To one who, herself the soul of gentle pity, has no sympathy with doubt and no mercy on doubters, he tells how Arthur, the type of noble manhood, fearlessly entered the realm of darkness, and faced the phantoms there, and quelled them by force of moral courage and perfect purity of heart, so fighting his way to a truer faith.

XCVII.

Turn where he may, the Poet sees his love reflected in all the universe. Rocks, trees, and mountains have often furnished him with images of it, and human life is full of parallels to it. To-day he sees it figured in an unequal marriage, where a certain separation of life has come without estrange-

ment, and a degree of dissimilarity involves no loss of love. The friend gone before is like a husband absorbed in profound contemplation or scientific research; the friend left behind is as a simple-hearted wife, faithful still, loving still, knowing nothing, but hoping all things, believing all things.

XCVIII.

The departure of a friend for Vienna directs his thoughts to that fateful city, and to the way thither, and that beautiful Rhine where he once sailed with Arthur. Of Vienna herself he can have no thought that is not heavy with anguish. In vain he calls to mind how Arthur himself praised her splendour, and her light-hearted, genial merry-making. She is the type of pain and loss to him.

XCIX.

It is the second anniversary of Arthur's death. This year the dawn is calm and beautiful with the beauty of early autumn. The Poet, waking, ponders on all the myriad souls to whom this balmy morning will bring memories of bridal, birth, and death. With all those fellow-creatures—by far the greater number—who will this day think upon their dead, he feels himself in mystic sympathy.

C.

The time draws near when the Poet—he and his—must leave his birthplace and early home. Gazing from a neighbouring hill at the dear, familiar landscape where the happiest season of life was passed, and where the two friends roamed together, every feature of it recalls the enjoyment of the one departed.

To leave the place is like a second death and loss of him.

CI.

In the garden, looking round on tree and shrub and flower and brook—all the friends of many years—a fresh pang comes with the sight of each. All these will be unwatched, unloved, uncared-for; till, perhaps, they find a home in a stranger's heart, growing dear to him and his, while the memory fades of those who love them now.

CII.

The hour of departure has struck. Roaming for the last time in the garden, the Poet feels two passions of his life contend within his breast for mastery, the love of the home of boyhood which he is leaving, and the love of the friend whose happiest hours in later times were spent there. Which association

most hallows the place? He knows not, but, as he turns to go, both memories melt into an unmixed pain.

CIII.

The Poet tells how, on the last night before leaving, a dream of beauty and of high import consoles him. In mystic vision he beholds Arthur, veiled, as the soul and the inspirer of every high poetic gift of his—typified by the maidens of his dream. These grow with his growth, till Here becomes Hereafter. Nor are they parted from him then. Arthur, no longer concealed from sight, and grown, he too, into the fulness of the stature of the perfect man, receives them, with him into the life beyond.

CIV.

It is the third Christmas Eve since

Arthur's death. On the first, four voices from four church-towers round the old home had sung Peace and Goodwill to the mourner. To-night, in the new home, but one peal of church-bells is heard. All is desolate and new and strange, and, cut off from sacred human memories, the very season loses half its sanctity.

CV.

Nor shall the house be decked with Christmas wreaths to-night. That tribute, paid half-grudgingly, half-tenderly, to use and wont for two years past, is needless here, in the strange dwelling. Grief shall not here be mocked with dance and revel; but a solemn silence shall prevail, and a holy memory shall reign in quietness. Let but the petty cares of daily life be suspended for a while, and nothing mar that sacred

calm. The Poet will have no stir, no motion, anywhere—save the perpetual motion of those great cosmic forces which, unhasting and unresting, are ever working together for good.

CVI.

On New Year's Eve the Poet once more listens to the church-bells, filled with all holy aspiration, and with strong hope for that closing cycle, rich in good. And among the evil things which he bids disappear with the revolutions of the years is the grieving overmuch for those gone before. This must be stilled, if we would work with our might to bring in the happier day when the good shall triumph and the Christ that is to be shall reign.

CVII.

Again, as often of late, the Poet sounds

a note of courage and good cheer. It is Arthur's birthday, a winter's day of piercing cold and gloom ; but he will have it kept with festal honours. The songs Arthur loved shall be sung to-day ; Yule logs shall blaze and wine shall flow, and the cheery talk shall be as though he were by.

CVIII.

More and more convinced is he that if sorrow is indeed to bear the peaceable fruit of righteousness in him, he must no longer brood over it in solitude. In lonely musings, the Solitary is too apt to see himself reflected wheresoever he turns his eyes. His own image is shadowed on the very heights of heaven to which he yearns, and pondering on the grave, he does but read his own thoughts into the mysteries of death. Only among our kind, in human

sympathy, and human fellowship, and human striving, can sorrow turn to profit.

CIX.

His thoughts perpetually revert to his fair ideal of wisdom, and of all human grace and goodness. After all, how should he turn away his eyes from the grave, since there his pattern lies, the man who combined the best gifts of man and woman in his own person, power and gentleness, passion and purity, the love of country and the love of children? Truly, he who should not learn wisdom from the bright influence of such a character would seek it in vain from any other teacher.

CX.

Musing still upon his sweet perfection, now one aspect and now another of that many-sided, richly-endowed nature appeals

to him. How magical was the charm of his presence! alluring to young and old alike, and working upon each according to the needs and capacities of each. The weak his converse strengthened; the proud it tamed; the foolish shamed. In the friend of his heart it kindled passionate love, and the emulation that is born of love.

CXI.

Nor had this man any need to strain after those polished courtesies of daily life, that unflagging urbanity of manner and unshaken grace and kindness of demeanour which some do but assume, and which few wear always without any break or lapse. For there was in him more graciousness than he could show, and, brushing all things rude and base aside, he *was* the thing that others *seem*.

CXII.

One whom the Poet reverences deeply chides him for a seeming blindness to any lesser merit than the surpassing merit of him whose perpetual elegy he sings. But all his field of vision is occupied by his image. It was so while he lived. To watch the development of such a character, so rich and fertile, yet so well governed, was a task all absorbing, excluding every other.

CXIII.

That lofty wisdom that died with him—how gloriously it would have served, not his friends alone, but his country! co-operating with all that was best in the travailing Spirit of the Age, but withstanding the revolution of mere selfishness and unrest, and the change which is not progress.

CXIV.

From thoughts of wisdom, the Poet turns to contemplate that younger sister of wisdom, knowledge, whom, while he loves even passionately, he fears to see divorced from her heavenly guide. Ah! if the world, which more and more tends to worship knowledge, apart from wisdom, were but as Arthur, whom knowledge never puffed up, but in whom every beautiful grace of the spirit grew with the growth of the understanding.

CXV.

Another spring has come, and all its lovely sights and sounds wake answering chords in the Poet's breast. The life within him stirs and quickens in responsive harmony with the world without. But his regret, too, blossoms like a flower.

CXVI.

Yet it is not now an unmixed regret. Those vivid impulses of spring are not all sad. Rather, the joyous resurrection of life around re-awakens hope and trust. It is to a future tie of lasting blessedness with Arthur rather than to the severed tie of bygone days that his quickened yearning points.

CXVII.

There is even a sort of rapture in the thought that the very separation will make the meeting, when that new bond shall be entered into, sweeter. It may be that the very mission and purpose of these parted days is to enhance the delight of the nearness that shall be.

CXVIII.

Full of deep lessons are these days and

hours. Who can think upon the gradual forming of this wondrous earth out of a sea of fire, until, at the last, man, the crowning work of Time, arose, and believe in man's annihilation? Then would the whole mystery of evolution be without a meaning. Nay, the dead live and work, and it is for us who remain to typify, each one in his own person, the grand scheme of Nature, ever striving upward, ever seeking to subdue the lower to the higher.

CXIX.

Once again, at early dawn, the Poet stands before the house that was Arthur's home. But he does not now gaze upon it in blank dismay and gloom. Here too, in the heart of the mournful city, the sweet influences of spring pursue him—the spring without, and the spring of awakened trust

and calmed regret and softened memories within.

CXX.

He returns—how should he do other?—to that pivot of the soul's desires, the hope of a hereafter. If, indeed, the physical aspect of our being be all, then is his faith vain. For his part—however it may be with others—once that cruel doctrine indisputably proved, he would no longer care to live.

CXXI.

Like the morning star which was the evening star, changed in nothing, except in place, he is the same who once appeared past comfort. There is no essential change in him. His love is there and his loneliness; and the "deep relations" of his grief are ever the same. But there is a fresh phase. All healthy and joyous impulses of morning

awake in him once more, and death is swallowed up of life.

CXXII.

As the Poet has felt aforetime the soul of Arthur transfuse his own, and been rapt above the night of loss and gloom into a burst of creative energy and unfettered play of high imagination, so now again he craves that inspiring presence. Again there are strong stirrings of poetic fancy within which long to slip the thoughts of life and death, and play freely round things bright and glad and beautiful. The spirit of his friend will quicken these with joyous sympathy.

CXXIII.

Again the mysterious play of mighty cosmic forces arrests his thought. Everything in the material universe is changing,

transient; all is in a state of flux, of motion, of perpetual disintegration and re-integration. But there is one thing fixed and abiding—that which we call spirit—and, amid all uncertainty, one truth is certain—that to a loving human soul a parting which shall be eternal is unthinkable.

CXXIV.

It is not by any effort of the understanding that we can apprehend God—the "Power which makes for Righteousness," for Love, for reparation of all wrong and anguish, for fruition of all endeavour. Not the grandest, not the most cunning-devised thing in all nature can prove Him, but only the perennial need of the universal human heart. And he who cries to Him, as a child to a father, out of the depths of this unutterable, ineradicable need of Him, shall feel—although

he may not see—His hands stretched out towards him.

CXXV.

Throughout his long Lament for Arthur, despite some surface bitterness, some troubled, jarring notes, the Poet's song has been, in fact, inspired by Hope and Love alone. These were sometimes disguised, but they were ever there. Whether the strain seemed sad or sweet and strong, Love breathed it—the Love that shall sustain him to the end.

CXXVI.

Love is and was his Lord and King,—no finite sovereign—but that benign, unfathomable Power to whom he consecrates his Elegy. As yet the Poet dwells but in His earthly court. Yet even here come heavenly messengers with tidings of the friend who has

reached that other court—with sweet assurances that all is well.

CXXVII.

Yes! all is well—well—not for him only, not for Arthur only, but for all mankind, for all the world. The nations are seeking good blindly—yea, madly; established creeds are crumbling, and thrones are tottering; all classes of society are shaken; the slowly-dying cause of the old *régime* is expiring amid portents of horror. But through the turmoil a deeper voice is heard that prophesies a happy end, and over all the blessed dead watch calmly, knowing all is well.

CXXVIII.

Akin to that faith (the Poet calls it love, for it is the same) that fought with Death and conquered is this faith which grapples with the temptation to despair of human

progress. Too often so-called progress appears but fruitless change, and — under altered names—old errors and old follies reappear. Yet, in the main, the peoples are striving upward, and, as through a glass darkly, the Poet sees all things working together for good.

CXXIX.

Nay, these two kinds of faith are more than akin—they are identical. It is one love, one faith, which clings to Arthur and which hungers for a nobler race, a happier world. When the Poet's hopes and aspirations for his kind rise highest, then is his friend most intimately near him, and that dear image mingles with every dream of good.

CXXX.

It mingles, too, with every aspect, every feature of the visible world; it dwells in air

and sea and star and flower. Yet, because Arthur has thus become for his friend, as it were, a part of the very universe itself; because his love for him has become a wider and a more impersonal thing, it is not therefore less. Nay, in that he seems to him a part of God's very being, a part of God's world, he is even nearer than before, and ever dearer. With joyous exultation the Poet triumphs in the thought that throughout his life, as well as after death, they are and will be one.

CXXXI.

And now, in solemn aspiration, the Poet's prayer ascends that that free, purified will which stands for what is highest and most enduring in us and has its source in heaven may govern all our deeds, so ennobling us that the faith which is born of righteous living may be ours, and our hearts may be

sustained and comforted till knowledge is made perfect and love completely blessed.

Fitly the Poet closes with a marriage-song. For his grief is turned to hope, his weeping into tranquil joy. Regret is dead, but love remains, and holy memories, and healthy power to work for men. In the union of a beloved sister with a dear friend, the Poet finds a bright, harmonious note on which to end his singing. For such a marriage is the very type of hope and of all things fair and bright and good, seeming to bring us nearer to the consummation for which we pray—that crowning race, that Christ that is to be. This perfected manhood towards which we strive was foreshadowed in him to whom the Poet sings—that friend who lives and loves in God for ever.

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